

## THE LANDSCAPE COMES ALIVE!!



### YOU ARE INVITED!

Please join us for our Annual meeting on **May 7th starting at 6:30 PM** at the Underhill Town Hall. We look forward to sharing JULT's latest conservation updates along with some excellent refreshments. Our guest speaker is Lisa Gannon who has served as State Coordinator of VT New England Antiquities Research Association (NEARA) for the past nine years. Her Power Point presentation is titled "Stunning Stonework: The Sacred Landscape of West Bolton, Vermont". She writes, " There exists a myriad of enigmatic stonework in the woods surrounding West Bolton, much of it resting on land conserved by the Jericho Underhill Land Trust. The geography and the ethnographic history of the Winooski River Valley may provide important clues as to the origin of these sites. " Come join us as we explore the mystery of the ancient stone cairns.

**D**affodils are exploding at Mills Riverside Park along with the more subtle signs of spring, the common wildflowers of Bloodroot, Trout-lily and Coltsfoot. The sounds of spring are also ever present with the male Cardinal signaling his intentions, joined by many other bird species. Some have recently arrived from long migrations.

At Kikas Valley Farm, the strawberry plants are already peeking out from under their warm mulch beds. Early morning farm labor has arrived to start the seasonal process...the composting, the tilling, the planting. The red-winged Blackbirds witness this work perched along the wetland accompanied by the killdeer, excitedly zigzagging across the open landscape.

The birthing season will soon arrive at the Wolfrun Natural Area. The trail along Big Swamp will be closed from May through July because so many species plan their babies in spring and early summer. We know that the Great Blue Heron rookery will be bustling, along with the more reclusive habitats of black bear, bobcat and moose. That is just to mention a few of the more prominent residents at this exquisite wildlife area.

With every new spring, JULT celebrates the permanent conservation of these important lands. We invite you to come visit and enjoy this season of renewal too. If you'd like company...plan on attending one of our events. *And if you are not a current member of JULT... please join us.* Our land conservation work depends on our membership, much like an early spring rain on a planted field that helps make things grow. Thank you.



## LAND CONSERVATION GROUPS MOVE TO PRESERVE BOLTON VALLEY NORDIC CENTER

JULT is teaming up with Vermont Land Trust (VLT) to help raise \$1,050,000 to purchase land that comprises the Bolton Valley Nordic and Backcountry Trail System. In early 2011, a private buyer made an offer for the land which would have cut off public access to the trail system. Led by volunteer Bolton Ski Patroller Ann Gotham, a group called Friends of Bolton Valley Nordic and Backcountry formed to protect the land and enlisted the help of VLT. It took a year for their work to reach fruition, but this March VLT signed a purchase and sales agreement for the 1,161 acres of land which includes both Nordic and backcountry ski trails. Since the land abuts the Mt. Mansfield State Forest, VLT intends to transfer ownership to the state with the expectation of signing a lease agreement with Bolton Valley Ski Area to continue operation of the Nordic Center.

In addition to being a great recreation center, the land in question is part of the Chittenden County Uplands Conservation Project area comprised of 8,000 acres of conserved land including Wolfrun Natural Area and the Gateway Project. Situated between Mt. Mansfield State Forest and Camel's Hump State Park, the land is crucial for area wildlife. Bear, bobcat, moose and many other species have been spotted on or near the trails.

JULT would like to ask our members to contribute generously to VLT for the preservation of this important land. Those contributing \$5,000 or more will become part of the Gardiner Lane Leadership Circle. Lane is responsible for the iconic trail running from Bolton to Trapp Family Lodge which is now part of the Catamount Trail. For years, he and his fellow "Old Goats" helped maintain the backcountry trails in the offseason, a tradition that continues to this date.

Visit the VLT website at [www.vlt.org/bolton](http://www.vlt.org/bolton) to learn more about the project or to sign up for regular e-mail updates.



## BIRD PREVIEW

Join intrepid birders Evergreen Erb and Maeve Kim for a delightful slide preview of our favorite local birds and recent spring migrants at the Deborah Rawson Memorial Library's Fireside Room at 6:30PM on May 24th. Then meet again at Mills Riverside Park at 7AM on May 25th for an exquisite, leisurely walk. Bring your binoculars and get ready to celebrate the variety of birds found within the park's numerous habitats. The event series is co-sponsored by the Deborah Rawson Memorial Library. Come to both events or pick one. Please call Livy at 899-2693 with any questions.

*Keep your eyes on our website and Facebook page for more spontaneous event dates.*

## VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES

- Does your love of the land extend to helping to remove invasive plants, minor trail repair or enhancing wildlife habitats?
- Are you interested in conservation and want to learn more?
- Would you like to join one of our committees for a hands on approach to land conservation and/or land stewardship?

A few hours can make a big difference to JULT. Please call Livy at 899-2693 or John at 899-1830 with your interests and any questions.

# DECAL DISCUSS

## Where do you put your JULT decal?

Every year, renewing JULT members get one of our beautiful decals. We've seen many on cars and some on file folders but we'd like to know where you put your decals.

**Send us a photo** of where you have the JULT decal and enter a drawing to win a quart of free strawberries at Paul Mazza's farm stand, grown on JULT land at Kikas Valley Farm.



# How Do You BENEFIT FROM LAND CONSERVATION

## Land Conservation Saves Limited Resources

Our air and water are limited resources. The tree canopy and vegetation serve as critical filters for our air. Wetlands that border our rivers, lakes and streams filter pollution before it reaches our drinking water. If we do not remove the pollutants that our society puts into the air and water, we consume them ourselves. In many communities it is not uncommon for air quality alerts to close schools and businesses. Already, nearly half of the river miles in America are too polluted to drink from and over 50 percent of our drinking water comes from rivers. Learn more about the threats to land conservation. Saving land in local communities helps offset this danger.

## Economic Benefits of Land Conservation

In addition to health and food benefits, conserving land increases property values near greenbelts, saves tax dollars by encouraging more efficient development, and reduces the need for expensive water filtration facilities. Study after study has demonstrated the tremendous economic benefits of land conservation.

## Land Trusts Help Your Community

- By helping individuals protect community resources that come from the land – water, food security, wildlife, and places for recreation and reflection
- Promoting stronger local communities by giving citizens the knowledge and support they need to reach out and work with their neighbors to protect the local places they need and love
- Serving as a part of a national community of land trust staff, volunteers, members and advocates committed to private land conservation across the country

Across the country, local citizens and communities have joined together to save the places they cherish by establishing land trusts. These non-profit, community-based conservation organizations acquire and protect land for the public good. Strong land trusts provide local communities with effective champions and long-term caretakers of their critical land resources. The nation's 1,700+ land trusts work with communities to acquire and manage land for the purpose of permanent conservation and then steward the land for public benefit. The land trusts are on the front lines with their local communities to help them save America's land heritage. Over the years, land trusts have been extraordinarily successful, having protected more than 37 million acres of land, according to the National Land Trust Census.

Land trusts help preserve land for future generations, protect our food and water supply, provide wildlife habitat, and strengthen communities.

<http://www.landtrustalliance.org/conservation/landowners/how-do-you-benefit-from-land-conservation>



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## Membership Matters

- Livy Strong  
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- John Koier  
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- Phyl Newbeck  
*Secretary*
- Hilaire Thomas  
*Treasurer*
- John Schroeder
- Trevor Squirrel
- Catherine Stevens

# Help protect our future landscape...TODAY

**Please note:** All JULT memberships now run on a calendar year from January 1st to December 31st.

**Please sign me up for:**

- Conservator** membership \$500
- Steward** membership \$100
- Sponsor** membership \$50
- Family** membership \$35
- Individual** membership \$25
- Student/Senior** membership \$10
- Lifetime** membership \$1,000  
*(Beat inflation and avoid renewal notices!)*

**Other considerations:**

- My employer's matching gift is enclosed.
- Please **do not** send me a "thank-you" gift.
- I wish to remain anonymous.

**Please contact me regarding:**

- Conservation options for my land
- Making a gift of stock
- Including JULT in my will
- Other planned giving opportunities
- Volunteer opportunities:
  - \_\_\_ Fundraising/Events
  - \_\_\_ Office/Administration
  - \_\_\_ Trails/Land Stewardship

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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Please make **checks** payable to **JULT** and mail to the address below. Or you may **pay by credit card via our website: [www.jult.org](http://www.jult.org)**. All contributions are tax-deductible.

